

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

EB-07 /065 W

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R 140413Z SEP 76

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3607

S E C R E T BAGHDAD 1337

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT IZ

SUBJECT: DEVELOPING RIVALRIES WITHIN REGIME

1. WITH DETERIORATION OF PRESIDENT BAKR'S HEALTH (BAGHDAD 1329), RIVALRIES FOR SUCCESSION OF POWER WITHIN SENIOR BAATH PARTY RANKS ARE BEGINNING TO BECOME MORE APPARENT. SADDAM HUSSEIN IS STILL CLEARLY THE HEIR, BUT CURRENT BAATH PARTY RULES PROVIDE THAT EITHER CHAIRMAN OR VICE-CHAIRMAN OF RCC MUST BE A MILITARY OFFICER. IN SPITE OF SADDAM HUSSEIN'S RECENT COMMISSIONING, IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO QUALIFY AS MILITARY MAN IN EYES OF SENIOR PARTY LEADERSHIP. IF HE BECOMES CHAIRMAN UPON DEATH OR RESIGNATION OF BAKR, IT IS NOT NOW APPARENT WHAT FUTURE ROLE IRAQ'S ARMED FORCES WOULD PLAY OR WHICH MILITARY MAN WOULD BECOME VICE CHAIRMAN. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SADDAM WILL ATTEMPT TO CHANGE THE RULES AND/OR HOLD NEW REGIONAL COMMAND PARTY ELECTIONS IN NEAR FUTURE.

2. ONLY APPARENT POSSIBLE RIVAL TO SADDAM HUSSEIN AT PRESENT TIME IS FORMER MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, NOW MINISTER OF HOUSING, TAHA JAZRAW. MOST BAGHDAD OBSERVERS BELIEVE THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN'S TELEVISED PERFORMANCE LAST WEEK AT LOW-PRODUCTIVITY SEMINAR (REPORTED IN FBIS) WAS THINLY DISGUISED ATTEMPT TO DISCREDIT JAZRAWI WHO IS MAN PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR EXISTING STRUCTURE OF IRAQ'S INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENT. DURING THIS SEMINAR, SADDAM HUSSEIN STRONGLY ATTACKED PRESIDENT OF SPINNING

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AND WEAVING ORGANIZATION, AMONG OTHERS, FOR INEFFICIENCY AND

LOW PRODUCTIVITY. THIS MAN IS CONSIDERED CLOSE ALLY OF JAZRAWI AND, IN FACT, HEADS ONE OF MORE EFFICIENT INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN IRAQ. SADDAM HUSSEIN DID NOT MENTION THE RAILWAYS ORGANIZATION OR OTHER PUBLIC CORPORATIONS WHICH ARE GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE MUCH LESS WELL MANAGED THAN THE SPINNING AND WEAVING ORGANIZATION. ACCORDING TO LOCAL RUMORS, HEAD OF SPINNING AND WEAVING ORGANIZATION SENT WRITTEN PROTEST TO SADDAM HUSSEIN AFTER THE TELEVISION PERFORMANCE AND HAS SINCE BEEN ARRESTED. ON THIRD DAY OF SEMINAR, MEETINGS WERE BOYCOTTED BY ALL OFFICIALS OF MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY WITH EXCEPTION OF RECENTLY APPOINTED MINISTER AL JASSIM WHO DUTIFULLY APPEARED IN ORDER TO RETAIN HIS PORTFOLIO.

3. JAZRAWI HAS APPARENTLY BUILT A NETWORK OF SUPPORTERS THROUGHOUT IRAQ'S CIVIL SERVICE AND INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS AND HAS PROBABLY BEEN ABLE TO USE HIS POSITION AS COMMANDER OF THE BAATHI PEOPLE'S ARMY TO GOOD ADVANTAGE. WE WOULD EXPECT RIVALRY BETWEEN JAZRAWI AND SADDAM HUSSEIN TO BECOME SHARPER AS BAKR'S DEPARTURE FROM SCENE BECOMES MORE IMMINENT. AT PRESENT TIME, SADDAM HUSSEIN SEEMS TO HAVE STRONGER HAND, BUT IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO MAKE ANY FIRM PREDICTIONS.

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